

# Putting The WRAPS On Water Quality In Kansas

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So what does a WRAPS mean?

Literally it means "Watershed Restoration & Protection Strategy"

A WRAPS is intended to be a locally driven effort by local stakeholders who have water quality concerns in their watershed. If you have not heard of it yet, you will. We have several already started across the state (Marais de Cygne, Little Arkansas, Neodesha, Cheney, Odin, Upper Fall River, Smokey Hill, to name a few), and many more to begin.

WRAPS lays out in 4 steps or phases:

## 1. Development (Who):

By this we mean the concerned stakeholders (citizens, local agencies, groups, etc) getting together and deciding they have a mutual interest /concern(s) in the watershed, therefore, create a group to begin the task to recognize and deal with it.

## 2. Assessment (What and Why):

The stakeholders assess their watershed, the water resources, the conditions of those resources, background & current conditions in the watershed (Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), land use, industry, water use, drinking water supplies, climate & hydrogeology, failing septic systems, livestock, urban yards & farm fields, etc.) and perceived threats to water quality in the watershed, and/or needs to restore water quality in the watershed. This is information to help identify the specific issues that the WRAPS will focus on. Is the need only physical Best management Practices, (BMP's), or is there a real need for information and education of the general citizenry or of a targeted water user group (people, industry, etc.)? We would hope that this assessment would be a holistic look at the watershed and all the uses and impacts on water that are occurring there.

## 3. Planning:

Planning is just what is says in making plans on how to address the water quality restoration and/or water quality protection issues that have been identified in the watershed through the assessment process, and to give priority and ranking to the issues that the stakeholders want to address.

This is where the "S" part of the WRAPS, the "strategy" comes into play (who, what, when, where and how). You lay out the specific water quality issue(s), and the plan(s) to address them, the players to be involved (citizens, businesses, local/state/federal agencies, etc.), programs to be utilized, possible funding sources (USDA, EPA 319, other), time lines, etc.

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#### 4. Implementation (Just do it):

Implementation is the physical implementation of BMP's, (with the use of funding programs), the information and education of citizens or water user groups, changes in zoning regulations or building/sanitation codes, etc. The work under the initial WRAPS effort may only take you through the Planning phase. The Implementation phase may turn out to be almost a separate effort in tapping the grant and cost share programs, funding sources, coordinating programs/efforts, etc., to achieve the aims set out in the Plan or Strategy.

So again the WRAPS is a template to allow local groups to determine water quality issue priorities in their watershed, and for them to plan at the local level how they want to approach the water quality restoration and protection issues that they feel are important. (We hope their vision is elevated to encompass the entire watershed when identifying issues)

So... what you want to do and how you want to do it are really up to you, thus you (the local collective you) can tailor the WRAPS to your local and specific needs, which may share some similar elements, and at the same time have some greatly different issues from what other folks in other watersheds may have or want to address. This explains the somewhat lack of specifics you may find if looking on our WRAPS Web site.

We are in the process of posting the WRAPS documents on our Watershed Management page on the KDHE Web site, <http://www.kdhe.state.ks.us/nps/wraps/index.htm> .

If interested in learning more we are of course available as a resource for guidance, as are our colleagues in this effort at Kansas State University extension services.